

tions in the matter is apt to feel dishonest in serving under a standard in which she does not believe.

I would be glad to know what is the general feeling on this subject.

A GRADUATE.

[We are very glad to publish this letter, which has been called out by our Editorial Comment in October, "The Path of Duty." There is always the other side, and we hope our readers understand that our pages are open for free discussion on every subject that concerns nurses. We would be glad to have further discussion of the subject, and will take it up again later.—Ed.]

HOW WILL THE HIGHER EDUCATION AFFECT THE NURSE IN PRIVATE PRACTICE?

FROM a financial point of view not at all, for the nurse engaged in private nursing will still have the privilege of earning her twenty-five dollars to thirty dollars a week, or whatever sum she likes to charge, and this amount we must remember includes her board and laundry for the time being. So, after all, I do not think she is so badly paid. Take any other occupation belonging to womankind. Compare the salaries so earned. How many can lay claim to one hundred clear dollars per month? Of course, a nurse is not employed all the year round. However, it is seldom she is idle more than three months of the year. So on an average the income will be about nine hundred dollars to one thousand dollars per annum.

The work will still go on being the same. It is no doubt hard and trying, but I cannot help thinking it quite a nurse's own fault if she sacrifices her own health in trying to do impossibilities in the way of foregoing sleep and recreation. For we are but human, and the public know that, like themselves, we too must have regular sleep either by day or night. So why think ourselves such martyrs? Half of it is imagination and the outcome of being dissatisfied. But it is the same with nearly all private nurses. Get a bevy of them together and you will hear the same story over and over again. One complains because she does not have the particular kind of food she likes, another because she could not go out when it suited her, and a third had too many steps to run up and down, and so forth.

No higher education or State registration will affect the routine of our daily work—in fact, it will increase rather than diminish. And we ourselves as individuals ought to be glad that the time is so close when we shall be placed on a sphere never attained before in our profession. For soon the name of nurse will have a significance and a social standing of its own, whereas before it meant anything or nothing. For instance, I was called to a family not very long ago and one of the children casually said

to me, "I have seen you go past the house often, but did not know that you were a nurse. I thought you were a lady, like mother." And again, how often in England, more so than in America, is a private nurse asked to take her meals with the servants, and when she quietly refuses there is much astonishment. It is in this respect we in private practice shall derive the benefit of our new laws and regulations.

Hospital life will continue much as before, with the salary unaltered. The work was ever philanthropic, and is based upon philanthropy, so that it is nigh impossible to sever the two. As for nursing being a grind, no, emphatically not! If we find such state of affairs exist with us, then it is quite time to leave the profession, for we shall cease to do much good.

In conclusion, the only way for these poor nurses who think their lives are so hard and their hours so long would be to organize some kind of union similar to that of the laborer, or any other workingman's union, and as for being physical wrecks after twenty-five years of service, I have no belief in it, for I know women who have been in the profession twenty-odd years and are still vigorous. Personally I fail to see what more benefits our nurses desire.

ALICE E. DRENNAN, City Nurse,
Harrisburg, Pa.

[LETTERS to the Editor must be accompanied by the name in full and address of the writer, otherwise such communications cannot be recognized. The name need not appear in the JOURNAL unless so desired.—ED.]



VALUE OF DISINFECTANTS.—The *New York and Philadelphia Medical Journal* in an abstract of articles in the *British Medical Journal* says: "Klein calls attention to the fact that the ordinary bacillary tests of disinfectants do not present the same conditions as are actually met with in the human body. In the tests simple watery emulsions of the bacillus are used, while under actual conditions, besides the bacteria, various tissue elements (leucocytes, tissue fibres, etc.) are met with. Thus a certain disinfectant completely disinfected a watery emulsion of typhoid bacilli, while the same disinfectant could not disinfect a typhoid stool in fifteen minutes. Sommerville reports the results of experiments undertaken to determine the relative bactericidal values of sanitas, formalin, and carbolic acid as applied to the typhoid bacillus. He found carbolic acid to be by far the most efficient, formalin being 0.4 and sanitas 0.02 per cent.